Revamping of Angkorwat, an. ancient temple in Cambodia

755. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased . to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about the revamping and poor conditions of Indian Culture Angkorwat an ancient temple in Combodia;

(b) if so, whether Cambodian Government has approached the Central Government for repairing/developing of the temple;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the foreign exchange expected to the incurred thereon; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The Archaeological Survey of India has carried out conservation of certain portions of Angkorwat in temple in Cambodia during the years 1986 to 1993. Subsequently, agencies from other countries were also associated with the scientific studies and conservation of Angkorwat.

(b) to (d) Combodian Government has requested India's co-operation in Conservation and Restoration of Ta Prohm temple. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India has entrusted this project to Archaeological Survey of India with an estimated cost of Rs. 19.57 crores to be executed in ten years. The work on this project has commenced from January, 2004. Archaeological Survey of India had completed documentation of the terriple and carried out detailed scientific investigations. The restroration works are in progress.

. **Ancient bridge between India and Sri Lanka**

756. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Archaeological Studies reveal that the age of Ram Sethu Bridge between India and Sri Lanka is about 17 lakh years old;

(b) whether it is a fact that NASA has released the images of an ancient bridge at the same place as mentioned above; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons for not declaring and preserving the said bridge as an ancient monument of National and Historical importance?